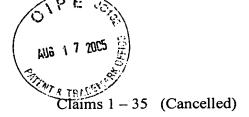
## IN THE CLAIMS



36. (Currently amended) A method for moving a plurality of wafers, comprising: positioning a plurality of blades end-effectors of a robotic hand adjacent an opening of a first wafer receptacle having a plurality of wafers arrayed therein, wherein the plurality of end-effectors also include a plurality of blades;

inserting the hand into the first wafer receptacle;

mechanically grasping a selected number of wafers by a corresponding number of blades;

withdrawing the hand from the first wafer receptacle; positioning the hand adjacent an opening of a second wafer receptacle; inserting the hand into the second wafer receptacle; and releasing the selected number of wafers into the second wafer receptacle.

- 37. (Original) The method of claim 36 wherein the selected number of wafers is one of one, two, three, four, or five wafers.
- 38. (Currently amended) The method of claim 36, further comprising sensing the presence of the selected number of wafers <u>on the plurality of end-effectors</u> in the first wafer receptacle.
- 39. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein sensing the presence and position of the plurality of wafers comprises sensing a wafer peripheral zone proximate the hand.
- 40. (Currently amended) The method of claim 39 wherein sensing the presence and position of wafer comprises detecting a displacement of a wafer contact pad when said wafer contact pad contacts a wafer peripheral zone.
- 41. (Original) The method of claim 39 wherein optically sensing the wafer comprises optically detecting a displacement of a wafer contact pad when said wafer contact pad contacts a wafer peripheral zone.

- 42. (Currently amended) The method of claim 38 wherein sensing the presence and position of the plurality of wafers comprises optically sensing a wafer peripheral zone of each wafer proximate the hand.
- 43. (Original) The method of claim 36 wherein mechanically grasping a selected number of wafers comprises mechanically grasping each wafer only at a peripheral zone thereof.
- 44. (Original) The method of claim 36 wherein releasing the selected number of wafers comprises arraying the wafers in the second wafer receptacle.
- 45. (New) The method of claim 36 wherein the robotic hand is structured to retain one or more grasped wafers during multi-planar movement.